

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the title as follows:

SAMPLE PROCESSING STATION INCLUDING PLATES

Please replace paragraph [0012] with the following replacement paragraph:

[0012] This task is resolved by the invention based on the characteristics of ~~claim 1~~ the sample processing station of the invention, wherein a removable evacuating plate unit is therefore arranged to span over the microtiter plate, said evacuating plate being designed as air-tight in such a manner that it permits the generation of a vacuum in all of the sample wells of the microtiter plate and said evacuating plate unit being controllably accessible via ports to a vacuum source or to a directed airflow source in the base plate of the device. The sample processing station, includes a device base plate; a shaking table plate vertically supported against said device base plate and movable in a horizontal plane; a shaking drive arranged between and connected to the two said plates for the horizontal movement of the shaking table plate, said movement essentially and exclusively being one of translation, with the means by which to arrest the shaking table plate into a precise resting position; a microtiter plate holding fixture provided on the shaking table plate; and a removable microtiter plate inserted in the holding fixture, said plate exhibiting a multitude of sample wells, which can be filled with samples or whose samples can be emptied out by an automatically activated filling or removing device; thus characterized, that over the microtiter plate is a removably arranged evacuating plate unit spanning over the latter, which is formed to be hermetically sealed in such a manner that a vacuum is permitted to be generated in all of the sample wells of the microtiter plate and which is controllably connectable to a vacuum source or to a

directed airflow source via ports in the device base plate.

Please replace paragraph [0014] with the following replacement paragraph:

[0014] Advantageous designs and complementary forms of embodiment of the sample processing station of the type provided here are characterized in the patent claims subsequent to the ~~present patent claim 1~~ sample processing station of the present invention, the contents of which are hereby expressly made to constitute the body of the description without the need, at this point, of having to repeat said formulation thereof.

Please replace paragraph [0015] with the following replacement paragraph:

[0015] Although said claims, as just mentioned, are subsequent to ~~claim 1~~ the sample processing station of the present invention, they indeed bear characteristics and characteristic combinations, whose significance is inventively independent of the characteristics in claim 1 and shall be more closely detailed in the following description.

Please replace paragraph [0044] with the following replacement paragraph:

[0044] The form of embodiment in accordance with figures 5A and 5B comprises once more a device base plate 1, a shaking table plate 3, a shaking drive 4 acting between the two latter plates ~~[[4]]~~ 1 and 3 and retaining means on the shaking table plate 3 provided for detachable insertion of a microtiter plate 6. Swivel supports of the structural element type of reference 2 from figure 1 have also been omitted in the representation in accordance with figures 5A and 5B just as in figures 2 through 4, but they are nonetheless provided in areas outside of the cross sectional plane selected for representation. The function of said swivel supports is to lend support to the shaking table plate 3 in a vertical and horizontal plane of motion.

Please replace paragraph [0062] with the following replacement paragraph:

[0062] Figure 7 shows a practical application of a sample processing station of the type provided here in accordance with the basic construction as per figure 4, whereby here however, a channel opening plate 53 is arranged on the microtiter plate 4 that is rigidly secured to the latter, said channel plate being rigidly secured to the microtiter plate by being welded/sealed ~~[if plastic]~~ if plastic. At the level of the openings of the sample wells 7 of the microtiter plate 4 is located a sample well connecting plate 54 and from the channel opening plate 53, channel connections 55 project as one piece from each individual sample well opening. The channel connections 55 have the shape of tube flanges with lower slosh baffle rings 56 formed as one piece with a truncated pyramid-like ring cross section. The slosh baffle rings 56 inwardly oriented from the flow opening of the sample wells 7 have the effect of preventing the sample contents from being spattered out of their respective sample well during vigorous shaking motions by the shaking table plate 3 or by the microtiter plate 4, even in the case of a comparatively high sample fill level in the sample wells 7.